Bronze no Tenshi
Volume 4 Chapter 16

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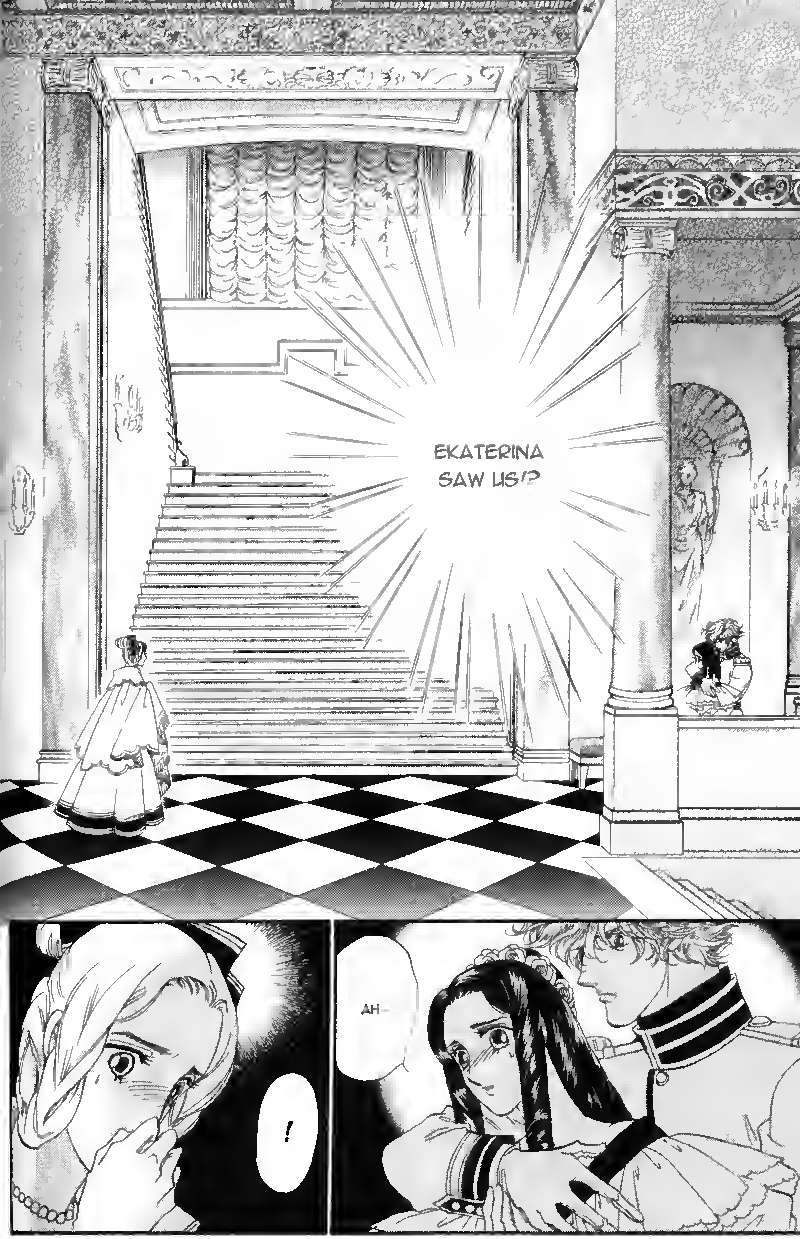
Vol. 16 Natalie


EKATERINA SAW US!?
!
AH—

FIRST
YOU'LL CAUSE YOUR SISTER TO SUSPECT US
HUSH
LET ME GO
LET
Hold
SLAP ME WITH ALL OF YOUR STRENGTH,
AND CRY, "HOW TERRIBLY RUDE!"
AS YOU DID BEFORE.
SLAP
HOW... HOW TERRIBLY RUDE!
MRS PUSHKIN

IT WAS A REALISTIC PERFORMANCE
A BIT TOO REALISTIC
That hurt
I DON'T WISH TO SEE HIM EVER AGAIN
LET'S HURRY OFF, EKATERINA
Sleeper Baron Dimitrov?
NATALIA... HAVE YOU...
JUMP
BUT MISS EKATERINA IS NOT SO NAIVE
PERHAPS WE SHOULD TRY AGAIN

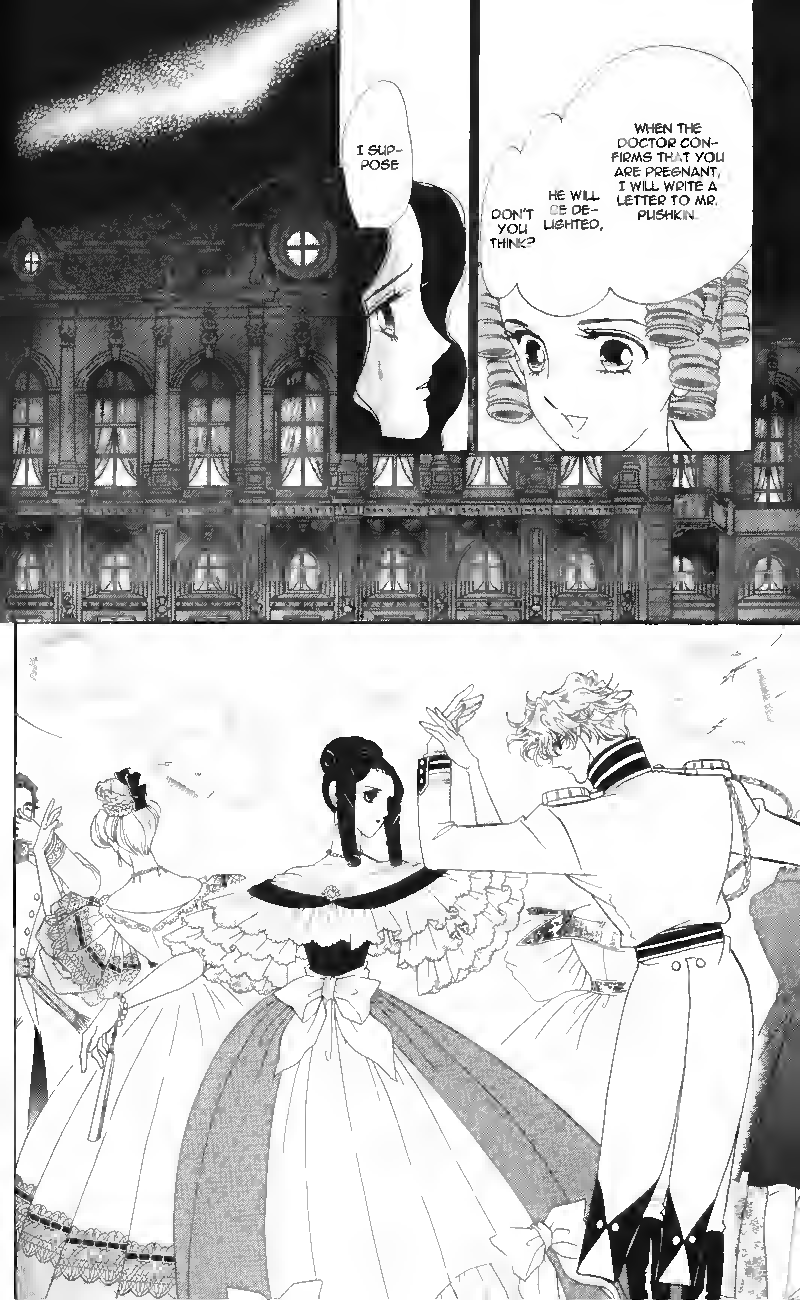
MERCI.
Not at all.
DO YOU HAVE ANY VODKA?
Y-YES, FOR PROTECTION AGAINST THE COLD.
GULP
!
Thud
MISS EKATERINA!
EEK!
ARE YOU WELL, NATALIA?
YES

WHA. WHAT WAS THAT?
!
I MUST WISH MRS PUSHKIN FAREWELL, AS WELL.
I HAVE YET TO WISH YOU FAREWELL.
WAI
I WILL WRITE TO YOU TOMO-RROW MORNING
HE IS ALWAYS CRUDE
I NEVER IMAGINED THAT HE WAS SUCH A CRUDE MAN!
HE MUST HAVE BEEN DRUNK
HE REE-KED OF ALCO-HOL.
Okkeee..
Okkeee..
Okkeee..

BARON D'ANTHES
WHAT WILL HAPPEN FROM NOW ON?
IT'S NO GOOD AT ALL!!!
I'LL NEVER FORGET THIS NIGHT, NOT EVEN FOR A MOMENT
THE BEGINNING OF A SPLENDID NIGHT!

I await your attendance to the ball at the Khitrovo mansion tonight
Should I not receive an invitation, I will slip into the ballroom in any way that I may
With the sole purpose of meeting you.
Your servant, Georges D' Anthes

SASHA
WHAT SHOULD I DO IN A MOMENT LIKE THIS?
I WASN'T ABLE TO SLEEP ALL NIGHT LONG.
HE TRULY SENT A LETTER.
NATALIA, ARE YOU STILL SLEEPING?
YOU HAVE TO NURSE GRIGORY
HE'S HUNGRY
NATALIA, HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
Hrb
SO YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO GO...
TO THE BALL AT THE KHITROVO MANSION, WILL YOU?
OF COURSE.
IT'S BETTER THIS WAY.
MOMMY!


I SUPPOSE
WHEN THE DOCTOR CONFIRMS THAT YOU ARE PREGNANT, I WILL WRITE A LETTER TO MR. PUSHKIN.
HE WILL BE DELIGHTED, DON'T YOU THINK?

THEY STAND OUT QUITE A BIT, DON'T YOU THINK?
BUT THEY HAVE ALREADY DANCED THREE SONGS
THAT'S TRUE
AT ANY RATE I WONDER WHEN THOSE TWO CAME TO BE ON SUCH CORDIAL TERMS
IN THE EVENING, SHE SUDDENLY RECOVERED
MR D'ANTHES HAS DANCED A PIECE WITH ME, AS WELL.
I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU FOR MRS PUSHKIN'S HEALTH PROBLEM LAST NIGHT, BUT
I APOLOGIZE FOR HAVING TROUBLED YOU,
MRS KHITROVO
PLEASE WAIT
I HAVE SOMETHING IMPORTANT THAT I MUST TELL YOU
NO MORE DANCES
GO DANCE
YOU'RE YOUNG
MAY I HAVE THE NEXT DANCE WITH YOU?
...
IT'S TOO LATE TO TELL ME THAT HE ONLY WISHED TO EMBRACE ME, THAT THERE WASN'T AN ULTERIOR MOTIVE..
...
A MESSAGE FOR YOU FROM THE TSAR

IT'S VERY SIMPLE
FOLLOW MY EXAMPLE
HOW SHOULD I BEHAVE IN FRONT OF THE TSAR FROM NOW ON? I HAVEN'T THE SLIGHTEST IDEA
IN OTHER WORDS
HE DOES NOT HOLD ANY OVERWHELMING DESIRE FOR HIS WOMEN
I COULD KISS MISS EKATERINA WITH THIS IN MIND
THAT IS A TOLERABLE AMOUNT
A SMALL KISS MIGHT BE PERMITTED
IF I PERMIT THE TSAR SOMETHING OF THAT KIND PUSHKIN WILL BE ANGERED

YOU HAVE THE TENDENCY TO BECOME FLUSTERED,
AND THAT ONLY WORSENS MATTERS
THE OTHER PARTY IS RATHER CONSCIOUS OF IT
ALL YOU MUST DO IS GREET THE TSAR CALMLY AND POLITELY, WITHOUT GROWING RED
IT'S FOR THE SAFETY OF HIS WIFE
SIGH
I SEE

Suppie
I LOVE YOU, NATALIA NIKOLAEVNA.
YOU HAVEN'T GIVEN ME AN ANSWER TO MY CONFESSION YET.

SIGH...
I WON'T BE ABLE TO RESIST!
I HAD A SLEEPLESS NIGHT
I WAS GOING OVER ALL THE TIMES I HAVE SPENT WITH YOU IN MY MIND...
BEGINNING WITH THAT FIRST MEETING, TWO YEARS AGO
I CANNOT YET...
GIVE YOU AN ANSWER
I'M SURE YOU'LL UNDERSTAND
TONIGHT I CAME TO TELL YOU...
MY CIRCUMSTANCES
NATALIA NIKOLAEVNA...
MY FEELINGS ARE THE LEAST IMPORTANT THING.
MY SISTER EKATERINA HAS TAKEN A LIKING TO YOU
I AM CURRENTLY PREGNANT WITH MY FOURTH CHILD
MY HUSBAND IS TROUBLED BY HIS WORK

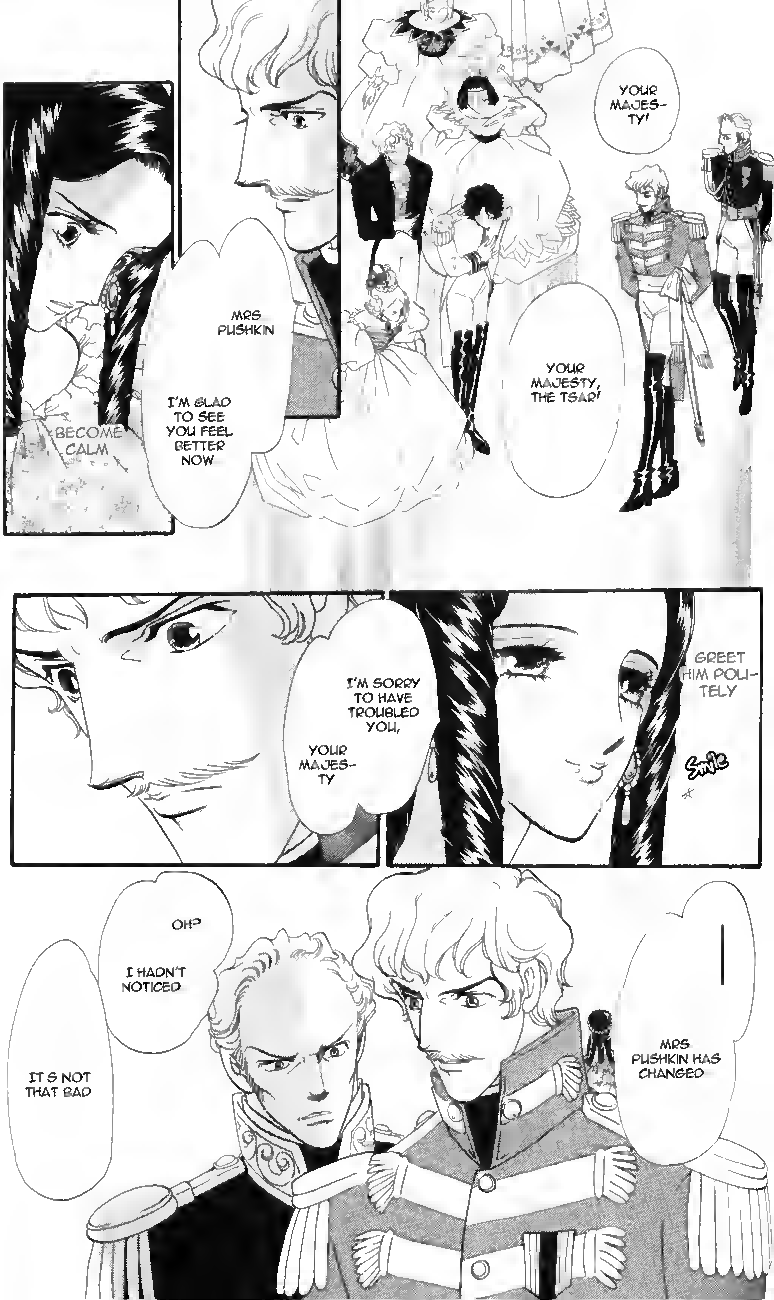
EVERY TIME I OPEN MY MOUTH, HE IMMEDIATELY CONFUTES WHAT I SAY

THE MORE I WORSEN MATTERS

THE MORE I SEE HIM,

AND SASHA IS NOT HERE

I MUST TAKE THESE MATTERS INTO MY OWN HANDS


YOUR MAJESTY!
YOUR MAJESTY, THE TSAR!
MRS PUSHKIN
I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU FEEL BETTER NOW
BECOME CALM
GREET HIM POLITELY
SMILE
I'M SORRY TO HAVE TROUBLED YOU, YOUR MAJESTY
OH?
I HADN'T NOTICED
IT'S NOT THAT BAD
MRS PUSHKIN HAS CHANGED

Vyazemsky Mansion
I HAVE RECEIVED A LOT OF GRUMBLING LETTERS FROM PUSHKIN.
IT SEEMS THAT HE HAS BEEN WORRYING ENDLESSLY ABOUT HIS MUSE! NOT VISITING HIM IN THE COUNTRYSIDE
I THINK HE SHOULD FORGET ABOUT LITERATURE AND RETURN AT ONCE
IF HE IS THERE AGAINST HIS WILL AND WISHES TO RETURN,

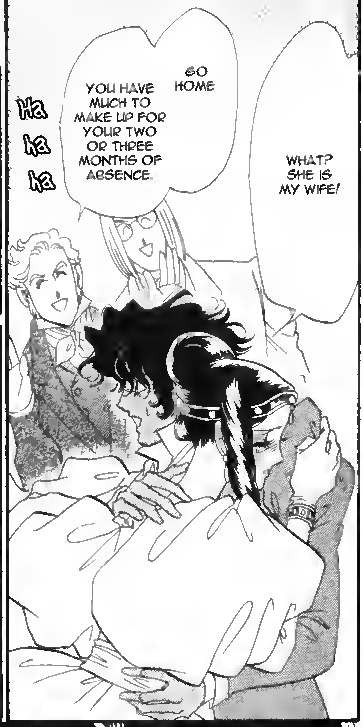
Flap
Flap
ESPECIALLY IF YOU TAKE A LOOK AT THEM.
Hey
PLEASE, TELL ME THAT YOU LOVE ME
I HAVE TOLD YOU MANY TIMES OVER
I CAN'T SAY THAT
I'LL ASK YOU AS MANY TIMES AS I MUST
I WOULD LIKE YOU TO PUT YOUR FEELINGS TOWARDS ME INTO WORDS
THEN I WILL NO LONGER DANCE WITH YOU
I'LL ASK YOU FOR A DANCE AS MANY TIMES AS I MUST

TO STOP SOMETHING YOU ENJOY
IS PAINFUL.
YOU HESITATE TO PUT IT INTO WORDS
DESPITE WHAT I HEAR YOUR WHOLE BODY TELLING ME WHEN WE DANCE,
I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOUR MEANING
YOU HAVE GIVEN ME NO PROOF OF YOUR HAPPINESS
IT IRRITATES ME, AND I'M HAVING A RATHER DIFFICULT TIME OF IT
THERE ARE RUMOURS THAT DESPITE HER MOTHER-IN-LAW'S FALLING ILL, MRS PUSHKIN NEVER PAID HER A VISIT.
OH,
WHAT IS IT?
DON'T YOU KNOW ABOUT PUSHKIN'S MOTHER?
I HEARD THAT, AS WELL.
ISN'T SHE DANCING TOO MUCH WITH THAT FRENCHMAN?
MRS PUSHKIN DOESN'T LOOK VERY HAPPY.

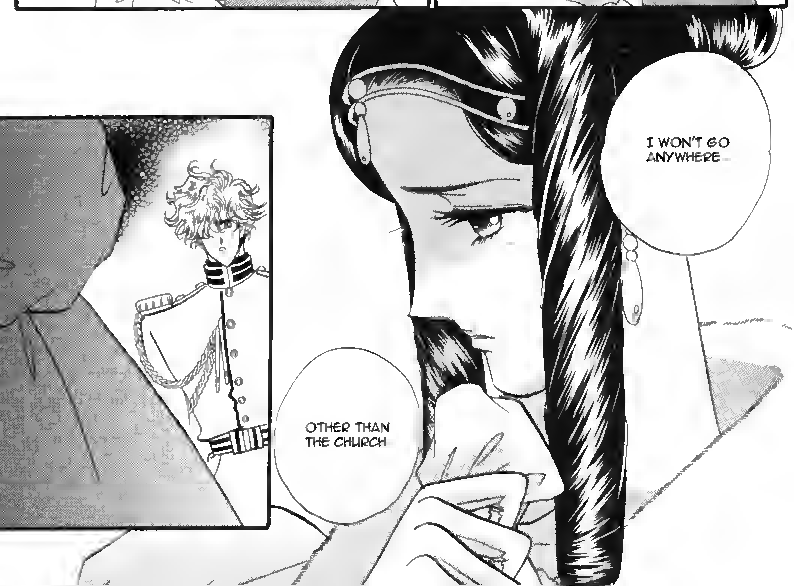
AND YET SHE DANCES EVERY NIGHT AWAY
MAKING THE GENTLEMEN SIGH
EXCUSE ME, MY LADIES
ON THE SUBJECT OF MY MOTHER
YOU ARE WRONG TO BLAME MY WIFE
!
IT'S MY OWN FAULT
FOR NEVER MAKING UP WITH MY MOTHER
PUSHKIN!
Aive
ARE YOU BACK?
WHEN DID YOU COME?
RIGHT NOW
YOUR CLOTHES ARE ALL DIRTY
THEY STINK!
WHEN I RETURNED HOME, I HEARD THAT NATALIA HAD COME HERE,
SO I CAME IN A RUSH WITH THE CLOTHES I WAS WEARING
SASHA

NATA-
LIA!
SWIP
SWIP
I WAS WORRIED ABOUT SEVERAL THINGS SO I CAME AHEAD OF TIME
HOW ARE YOU?
IT SEEMS THAT YOU HAVE LOST SOME WEIGHT
NATALIA?
HOW IS OUR BABY?

I WILL COME BACK TOMORROW TO TALK AT EASE


GO HOME
YOU HAVE MUCH TO MAKE UP FOR YOUR TWO OR THREE MONTHS OF ABSENCE.
Ha ha ha
WHAT? SHE IS MY WIFE!

WHERE CAN WE SEE EACH OTHER TOMORROW?
Wipe
...


I WON'T GO ANYWHERE...
OTHER THAN THE CHURCH

DADDY, YOUR BEARD TICKLES ME!
MY CHILDREN, YOU HAVE GROWN HEAVIER!
Hey
THERE IS STILL A LONG WAY TO GO.
I WAS THINKING THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO SPEND THE CHRISTMAS TOGETHER...
WHY ARE YOU CRYING, ALEXANDRA?
EKATERINA
DID SHE NOTICE?
YOU TOO, NATALIA
YES
NOW EVERYBODY WILL BE ABLE TO SETTLE DOWN
ANYWAY, I'M GLAD

FIRST I WILL PROPERLY DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM WITH MY MOTHER
I'LL GO AS AN EXPRESSION OF CONCERN AND I WILL CONSULT MY FATHER IF SHE IS RECEIVING A PROPER MEDICAL TREATMENT
THEN I'LL ASK THE TSAR TO LET THE LITERATURE JOURNAL TO BE PUBLISHED AGAIN
TOMOPPOW I'LL GO TO VYAZEMSKY S TO WORK OUT THE DETAILS
I'LL FIRE THAT SLOTH OF A CHIEF
COUNTING THE COSTS FOR THE DOCTOR, THE BIRTH, THE WET NURSE...
AND ALSO THE PUBLICATION COSTS
I WILL BE INDEBTED ONCE AGAIN...
YOU CAN SELL MY PEARL NECKLACE
THERE IS NO NEED FOR THAT
YOU HAVE TO STAY PRETTY, AFTER ALL.
STOP
DON'T TREAT ME LIKE A CHILD
NATALIA.
YES

YOU HAVE CHANGED, HAVEN'T YOU?
YOU HAVE A FIRMER CHARACTER NOW
I LOVED YOUR CHILDISH SIDE, BUT..
!
IT'S FINE
Zzz
I'M NO LONGER WHO I USED TO BE
DID I CHANGE?

COME THIS WAY
YES.
SO YOU TWO WANT TO GO TO CONFES-SION
OH!
NATALIA, THAT S
WHY IS HE HERE?
BARON D'ANTHES!

...
THEN CONFESS
YOUR SIN TO GOD
YES
...
...
...
YOU ARE ABSOLVED OF YOUR SINS
SIN NO LONGER
NOW IT'S MISS ALEXANDRA'S TURN
COME HERE
...
WHEN I'M IN FRONT OF MY BROTHER-IN-LAW I CAN'T RESTRAIN MY FEELINGS

WHY ARE YOU HERE?
I THOUGHT THAT YOU MIGHT ATTEND THIS CHURCH AS IT IS THE CLOSEST TO YOUR HOUSE.
YOU, AS A FRENCHMAN AND A CATHOLIC BELIEVER, LOOK SUSPICIOUS IN AN ORTHODOX TEMPLE
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME
YOU CAME HERE...
TO TALK TO A PRIEST ABOUT ME
IF YOU HAVE MONEY,
YOU CAN MANAGE EVERY SITUATION, WHEREVER YOU ARE
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?

SHUSH
THAT YOU LOVE... YOU SAID...
DID YOU HEAR IT?
MY CONFESSION?
I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW CRUEL YOU ARE!
THIS IS A SACRED PLACE...
STOP IT. THIS IS NOT THE PLACE TO...
I WANT TO HEAR IT ONCE AGAIN.
FOR YOU, I DON'T CARE IF I GO STRAIGHT TO HELL.

YOU REALLY WILL FALL INTO THE PITS OF HELL
YES
YES, I CONFESSED TO THE PRIEST
TELL ME THAT YOU LOVE ME
THAT I LOVE YOU
Ju
!
YOU LIED TO ME?

YOU LIED, DIDN'T YOU?
BUT YOU...
YES
ALTHOUGH I EAVESDROPPED ON YOUR CONFESSION IN RUSSIAN TO THE PRIEST, I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND IT
DESPITE HAVING BEEN IN RUSSIA FOR TWO YEARS, THERE ARE THINGS I DON'T YET UNDERSTAND
YOU ARE VERY CLEVER,
AND I HAVE BEEN TRICKED SO EASILY
I TRULY AM WITLESS
I FIND..
YOUR HONESTY LOVELY
IT'S YOUR CHARM

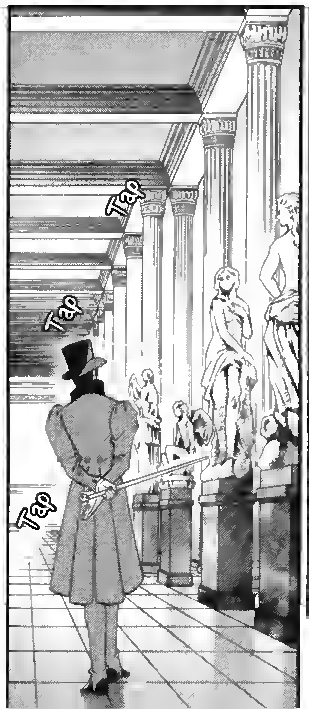
I IMMEDIATELY UNDERSTAND WHAT IS ON YOUR MIND
BUT THAT'S BECAUSE I AM ALWAYS WATCHING YOU
YOU
CAN'T DECEIVE THE HEART OF SOMEONE WHO LOVES YOU
YOU CAN EVEN TELL WHAT I'M WISHING FOR NOW?

THAT IS WHAT I HAVE JUST SWORN, AND YET..
SIN NO LONGER.

NATALIE...

A NEW NAME
FOR ME...

France



Paris

WHERE DID THE OLD NATALIA GO ?

AS FAR AS I CAN SEE, YOU'RE HAVING LOTS OF FUN
This morning I handled my military duties easily. I ended up sleeping this afternoon. Lately, I always come back home in the mornings after having spent all night dancing.
Crackle
Dear Baron Heckeren, my friend and my soon-to-be father,
You are now in my beloved Paris, aren't you?
Excuse me for not replying your last letter.
It wasn't because I neglected it.
It may be difficult to believe, but it's just the opposite.
DON'T LIE, D'ANTHES
Well, It's a daily torture.
Because I have fallen in a feverish, inescapable love.
It has left me unable to find rest for either my body or my mind.
It doesn't matter if it's day or night.
"LOVE"
I can only tell her how much I love her when we are dancing.
We can't be alone together
because she is married.

MRS PUSHKIN!?
I love her passionately
I feel capable of opposing even the Tsar.
She was standing alone near the door.
Her husband took her along and she was going to return home.
I can only show my love for her through dancing, and that hurts me to such an extent that I feel as if I am going to die.
My true self ... is full of jealousy when I face the husband who has her all for himself
Under the mask of enjoyment..
That night, as well—

DID YOUR HUSBAND LEAVE YOU ALONE WHILE HE STANDS AROUND TALKING?
THE TSAR HAS GIVEN HIS PERMISSION
HE IS IN HIGH SPIRITS BECAUSE THE LITERATURE JOURNAL IS GOING TO BE PUBLISHED AT LAST
IT SEEMS AS THOUGH HE FOUND A COMMUNIST
YOU WILL GROW COLD HERE
BUT OUR COACH IS COMING SOON IF I GO INSIDE, I WON'T SEE IT—
YOU SHOULD WAIT FOR HIM INSIDE
THEN COME HERE TO AVOID THE WIND

I WANT TO KISS YOU
YOU CAN'T, NOT HERE
NOBODY WILL SEE US HERE IN THIS DARK
MOST CERTAINLY NOT, WHAT IF SOMEONE WERE TO COME?
KISS
BARON?
I TRULY WISH TO BE ALONE WITH YOU

I HAVE USED EVERY POSSIBLE EXCUSE...
TO SEE YOU EVERYDAY FOR A LITTLE WHILE, TO SPEND SOME LITTLE TIME WITH YOU.
AT THE BEGINNING, I WAS LOOKING FOR A CHANCE TO TOUCH YOU...
TO WHISPER TO YOU, TO KISS YOU SOFTLY...
I DIDN'T NEED MUCH TO BE HAPPY.
BUT MY DESIRE IS STEADILY GROWING STRONGER.
IT HAS BECOME SO PAINFUL TO ENDURE.
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME?
...
I
I WANT EVERYTHING OF YOU.
I WANT TO BE YOUR LOVER.
GET IN MY COACH AND WE WILL GO TO SOMEPLACE WHERE WE CAN BE ALONE TOGETHER

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TONIGHT, I WANT YOU TO MAKE EXCUSES TO MEET ME
!
AT ANY RATE?
THAT IS—
I DON'T CARE IF YOU SPURN ME.
I WANT TO BE WITH YOU BECAUSE I LOVE YOU.
I'M THAT SORT OF MAN.
...
I SEE

NOW...
I UNDERS-TAND THAT YOU HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY...
I WANT TO GO SLOWLY WITH YOU
IT MAY HAVE SOUNDED AS IF I WERE THREATE-NING YOU.
...
I...
I HAVE NEVER LOVED ANYONE AS I LOVE YOU NOW.
I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THIS FEELING.

IF YOU LEAVE ME,
THERE WILL BE NOTHING TO HELP IT
I CANNOT GIVE ALL OF MYSELF TO YOU
BECAUSE EVERYTHING EXCEPT MY HEART
IS NOT MINE
I AM THE SORT OF WOMAN WHO CAN ONLY BE HAPPY WHEN TAKING GOOD CARE OF MY DUTIES. I WAS BROUGHT UP THAT WAY
NATALIE?
PUSHKIN IS LIKE A FATHER WHO PROTECTS ME
GOD IS THE GUIDE WHO PROTECTS MY SOUL.
BUT YOU HAVE BECOME AN EXISTENCE SUPERIOR THAN GOD TO ME
YOU MEAN EVERYTHING TO ME NOW
BUT

I CAN ONLY GIVE YOU...
MY HEART!
DON'T DISDAIN ME
PLEASE, TAKE PITY ON ME!
AT LEAST MY HEART
MY HEART IS ONLY...
YOURS.
THE REST DOESN'T BELONG TO ME...
NATA-LIA...

LET'S GO HOME THE COACH IS HERE
YES

There is neither despair nor sorrow...

but a love that fills me with a great happiness.

It is the first time that such a thing has happened to me.

It is the first time that I have experienced a love for a woman that makes me feel as though I were touching heaven...

I hope to hear from you soon.
My dear Baron.
Please, try to understand and tolerate my new love.
WHAT ON EARTH IS THIS!?
WHAT ABOUT VICTORIA, THEN? AND THE PROMOTION?
WHERE DID YOUR AMBITION GO?
Your son, Georges D'Anthes
I love you with all my heart
I SUPPOSED I MUST ADOPT HIM
WITH ONLY THIS SINGLE WORD CALLED "LOVE", I